Reviewer's report

Title: Trends in overweight and obesity in Lebanon: Evidence from two national cross-sectional surveys (1997 and 2009)

Version: 1 Date: 11 July 2012

Reviewer: Dieu Huynh

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Discretionary Revisions

The paper provides an update on obesity problem in Lebanon that is helpful to public health authorities. There are some comments that might need to be addressed before the paper should be published.

Abstract:
If there is no word count limit, it would be informative to include the definitions for overweight and obesity.

Methods:
1. How was the information on age, sex, family history of obesity, parental education, crowding index and physical activity collected and analyzed?

Statistical analysis:
2. Was the normality check done for continuous data such as BMI? Was BMI normally distributed so that the mean instead of median values and t-test were used for comparison?

Results:
1. Although the main focus of the paper is trends in overweight/obesity, a summary table for weight and height would be helpful in providing useful information on physical status for Lebanese.

2. Table 1:
Suggest adding the third row from top to give the total number of subjects (N) by genders and for both genders in two surveys.

3. Paragraph 2 – Results section
Mean BMI (± SD) instead of BMI (± SE) as presented in Table 2.

Table 2:
The author may want to add the 50th percentile BMI. This provides an idea on the distribution of the data when comparing with the mean BMI.

Table 3:
The third row: it should be BMI Z-scores e.g. +1SD <BMI Z-scores <+2SD.
It was not clear what the superscript a means. Similarly for Table 4.

Table 5:
The table title mentions both or combined overweight and obesity prevalence but only obesity prevalence presented in the table.

Conclusion:
I do not think using data from these two cross-sectional surveys would limit the generalization of the results. These are nationwide studies using multistage cluster sampling and all the areas in the country have had the same chance to be included.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests